

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

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TAGS: BTRA (QUENTIN M. WEST) EG

SUBJ: US/EGYPTIAN JOINT COOPERATION COMMISSION-
AGRICULTURE JWG

REF: STATE 193322

FOR NEA/EGY

DEPT PASS AGR FOR QUENTIN WEST

1. SUMMARY-USDA OFFICIALS QUENTIN WEST AND RALPH MCCRACKEN VISITED CAIRO SEPTEMBER 16 TO 19 IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR WORK ON THE JWG FOR AGRICULTURAL COOPERATION. WEST AND MCCRACKEN WERE THE FIRST JWG VISITORS TO DISCUSSIONS IN CAIRO UNDER THE JWG FRAMEWORK. AS SUCH THEY RECEIVED HIGH LEVEL TREATMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND SAW. DR. ABD-AL AZIZ HEGAZI, FIRST DEP PRIMIN, IN A MEETING ARRANGED BY DR. EFFAT, THE COORDINATOR FOR AMERICAN ASSISTANCE. WHILE VISIT WAS TO HAVE BEEN A PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE EARLY OCTOBER RETURN TO WASHINGTON OF THE JWG,THE OUTCOME WAS FULL BLOWN CONTINUATION OF DISCUSSIONS HELD BETWEEN WEST AND SALAH TEWFIK, UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE, IN AUGUST. AGREED MINUTE WAS PREPARED. END SUMMARY

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2. MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE ARRANGED INTENSIVE TWO DAYS OF BRIEFINGS FOR USDA OFFICIALS WEST AND MCCrackEN WHICH DWELT WITH ALL ASPECTS OF EGYPTIAN AGRICULTURE AND FOCUSED ON THE PACKAGE OF REQUESTS WHICH THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE HAD PREPARED FOR THE AUGUST MEETING. EGYPTIANS WERE EXTREMELY WELL-PREPARED. WEST AND MCCrackEN AGREED TO THE PREPARATION OF A JOINT MINUTE WHICH THEY ARE CARRYING WITH THEM. ESSENTIALLY DOCUMENT (A) RESTATES AGREED AREAS OF DISCUSSIONS; (B) DIVIDES EGYPTIAN PROPOSALS INTO TWO CATEGORIES, THOSE REQUIRING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND THOSE REQUIRING INVESTMENT; (C) MENTIONS THE CONSIDERATION OF FERTILIZERS, PESTICIDES AND FEED GRAINS UNDER COMMODITY PURCHASE AGREEMENTS; (D) AGREES THAT THE US SHOULD MOUNT A MISSION TO ASSESS WITH EGYPTIAN COUNTERPARTS THE DEVELOPMENTAL REQUIREMENTS OF EGYPTIAN AGRICULTURE WITH A VIEW TO PROMOTING A PROGRAM OF COOPERATION; (E) MENTIONS THE POSSIBILITY OF AID SENDING A THREE MAN TEAM TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN LAND RECLAMATION, DRAINAGE AND HYDROLOGY "WITHIN THE NEXT TWO MONTHS".

3. WEST, IN HIS DISCUSSIONS POINTED OUT THE BASIS INABILITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO MOVE WITHOUT THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF AID. ALTHOUGH MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE OFFICIALS ACKNOWLEDGE THIS EXPLANATION, IT WAS CLEAR FROM DISCUSSIONS THAT THEY HOLD HIGH HOPES OF HEAVY US INVOLMENT IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN EGYPT.

4. DURING MEETING WITH IRST DEPT PRIMIN, DR. HEGAZI ASSURED USDAO OFFICIALS THAT AGRICULTURE HAD HIGH PRIORITY IN EGYPTIAN DEVELOPMENT PLANS. WEST TOLD US HE OBSERVED THAT THE IMPRESSION IN WASHINGTON WAS THAT AGRICULTURE HAD A RATHER LOW PRIORITY, HEGAZI REPLIED THAT THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE CORRECTED.

5. COMMENT: WHAT WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN PREPARATORY MEETING TURNED INTO FULL BLOWN JWG SESSION THANKS TO EAGERNESS OF MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE OFFICIALS. WEST AND MCCrackEN SOUGHT TO BE REALISTIC IN TERMS OF WHAT COULD BE EXPECTED IN WAY OF ACTUAL ASSISTANCE IN THIS AREA, BUT REACTION OF MINISTRY OFFICIALS UNDERLINES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GREAT EXPECTATIONS WHICH WE ARE FACING IN EGYPTIAN BUREAUCRACY IN THIS AND OTHER JWG'S.

6. WE WOULD APPRECIATE PRIORITY ATTENTION BEING GIVEN BY AID TO SUGGESTION THAT SMALL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TEAM BE SENT OUT IN THE FIELD OF HYDROLOGY IN ADVANCE OF THE MAIN ASSESSMENT TEAM TALKED ABOUT IN THE WASHINGTON DISCUSSIONS. BELIEVE THAT THIS COULD

BE OF THREE TO FOUR WEEK DURATION AND COULD BE PAID
FOR OUT OF EXCESS CURRENCY FUNDS. THIS WOULD HAVE
POSITIVE IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE OFFICIALS AND WOULD
BE IMPORTANT STEP IN KEEPING MOMENTUM GOING IN
THIS INTRINSICALLY IMPORTANT AREA OF COOPERATION.
WE WOULD HOPE TO SEE SUCH TEAM RETURN WITH EGYPTIAN
DELEGATION FROM EARLY OCTOBER MEETINGS IN WASHINGTON.
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